

# AVIATION INVESTMENT AND REFORM ACT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

SPEECH OF

## HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 1999*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1000) to amend title 49, United States Code, to reauthorize programs of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes:

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Chairman, I regretfully rise in opposition to H.R. 1000. Our country's aviation system is integral to our nation's transportation system and there's no question we need to continue to invest in America's aviation infrastructure.

The problem is that this bill takes the Aviation Trust Fund "off-budget" which means aviation taxes cannot be used for any other purpose, creating what's called a firewall around billions of dollars in aviation taxes. As a former member of the Budget Committee and a current member of the Appropriations Committee, I can safely say this makes a mockery of the budget process and threatens our surplus.

Supporters of the bill argue that since the money in the aviation trust fund comes from aviation taxes, it should all be spent for aviation purposes. As a matter of tax fairness, federal taxes should be spent for their intended purposes.

But this is simply a red-herring argument to justify placing aviation spending at the absolute head of the line in competition for federal funds. Furthermore, taking the trust fund off-budget means that there would be no budget constraints to control aviation spending.

This is troubling for two reasons.

First, why are we exempting aviation programs from the normal budget scrutiny that all other programs must endure? Do we really want to place aviation funding ahead of all other federal priorities such as education, health care, Medicare, or national defense?

Second, taking the trust fund off-budget means we jeopardize our surplus. AIR-21 will spend \$14.3 billion more over five years on airport construction, busting the budget caps. This additional funding, since it's not subject to the normal budget rules which require offsets, will be paid out of the surplus. While Republicans may be confused as to what their priorities are, Democrats are unified that any budget surplus should be dedicated to shoring up Social Security and Medicare.

Let's be clear. This bill is nothing more than an attempt to put one small part of the budget ahead of the other. At the same time, it busts our spending caps, eviscerates any notion of reasonable fiscal discipline and handicaps our ability to preserve the surplus.

If Congress feels we should increase the nation's investment in aviation, let's do that. But let's not permanently put one category of spending ahead of another. In the spirit of budget discipline and fairness, I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill.

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### RESOLVING THE CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA

#### HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 22, 1999*

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following article from The Boston Globe on December 4, 1998 for the RECORD. The conflict in Sri Lanka has existed for over 16 years without any solution. We must encourage the parties involved to stop the terror and to accept a third party mediation to end the war.

[From the Boston Globe, December 4, 1998]

#### A CHANCE FOR PEACE IN SRI LANKA

For the first time in four years, there is a glimmer of hope for peace talks to end one of the world's bloodiest conflicts, the war between the government of Sri Lanka and that country's Tamil minority. Terrible suffering on both sides has induced a war-weariness that may become the prelude to peace-making.

A call for negotiations last Friday from the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam drew a wary but welcoming response from Sri Lanka's main opposition party. "This is a major move by the Tigers, and it is a very positive one to which the government must respond," said the leader of the United National Party. This response is promising because for too long the opposition and the governing People's Alliance of President Chandrika Kumaratunga have competed to appear the more inflexible foe of dialogue with the Tamils.

Because Washington maintains warm relations with the Sri Lankan government, even providing training and arms sales to its armed forces, and since the Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran called for third-party mediation in his offer of negotiations, the United States could play a crucial role in ending Sri Lanka's long nightmare.

The State Department has been reluctant to become involved in the conflict because neither side had been willing to accept the premise of a negotiated solution, as the antagonistic parties did for the Oslo accords in the Middle East and the peace talks that George Mitchell guided in Northern Ireland. Even now the State Department does not want to rush ahead of events.

Nevertheless, Tamil intermediaries are sending exploratory messages to the Tiger leadership asking about the chances for a cease-fire. If the Tigers want to shed their well deserved reputation as incorrigible terrorists, they will accept the idea of a cease-fire. In return, the Chandrika government should agree to withdraw its troops from the northeast province. If these gestures of good will are made by the belligerents, the United States would do well to take on the role of third-party mediator in peace talks.

### TRIBUTE TO COLONEL GILPIN RAY FEGLEY, UNITED STATES ARMY, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

#### HON. GENE TAYLOR

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 22, 1999*

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Colonel Gilpin R.

*June 22, 1999*

Fegley as he prepares to culminate his active duty career in the United States Army. Gil is the epitome of an outstanding officer and leader.

Colonel Fegley began his career more than 25 years ago when he was commissioned as a second lieutenant, and first served as an Assistant Staff Judge Advocate Trial Counsel in Grafonver, Germany. A graduate of the Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and the Command and General Staff College, Gil Fegley has met the many challenges of military service as an Army Officer, and has faithfully served his country in a variety of command staff assignments in the Continental United States, Hawaii, and Germany. Gil also deployed in support of Operation Desert Storm as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate.

Gil has served in the Army Legislative Liaison Investigation and Legislative Division as the Chief, Legislative Counsel. During his tenure in the Legislative Liaison Office, Gil worked hard to represent the interests of the Army to Members of Congress. He presented a positive and impressive image of the Army during the course of his duties there.

He concludes his career as the Special Assistant for Installations and Legal Issues in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs. Always thorough and precise in applying his legal skills, Gil was also very generous with colleagues, both senior and subordinate, who sought out his advice on legislative matters. Senior Defense officials depended on Gil for his studious approach to matters and Congressional Members and staff looked to him for his honesty and professional assessment of any given situation.

Mr. Speaker, service and dedication to duty have been the hallmarks of Colonel Fegley's career. He has served our nation and the Army well during his years of service, and we are indebted for his many contributions and sacrifices in the defense of the United States. I am sure that everyone who has worked with Gil joins me in wishing him and his wife, Marion, health, happiness, and success in the years to come.

### NATIONAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

#### HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 22, 1999*

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Juneteenth National Museum, located in my home district of Baltimore, Md., and in observance of the National Juneteenth Celebration.

On Saturday, June 19, 1999, the Juneteenth National Museum held its 11th annual "Juneteenth" celebration commemorating the Emancipation Proclamation. Juneteenth is generally celebrated on June 19, which is considered as the day of emancipation from slavery of African-Americans in Texas. It was this day in 1866 that Union Major General Gordon Granger read General Order #3 to the people of Galveston, Texas, informing them of their new status as free men. Since then, Juneteenth was celebrated in Texas, and